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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3805th meeting of the Security Council, held on 30 July 1997 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Liberia", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the successful holding of presidential and legislative elections in Liberia on 19 July 1997. The Council notes with satisfaction the letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/581) and the declaration in the Joint Certification Statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that the electoral process was free, fair and credible, and that the outcome of the elections reflects the will of the Liberian voters.

"The Security Council calls upon all parties to abide by the results of the elections and to cooperate in the formation of a new government. The Council also calls upon the new government to protect the democratic system and to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms under the rule of law.

"The Security Council congratulates the people of Liberia on the courage and determination they have shown in proceeding with the elections under difficult circumstances. The Council commends all international personnel, especially those of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and the Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) of ECOWAS, who contributed to the successful holding of elections.

"The Security Council welcomes the goodwill and cooperation demonstrated by the parties in the electoral process, which provides a strong foundation for the people of Liberia to achieve a durable peace, the re-establishment of constitutional government, and a return to the rule of law. The Council expresses the hope that the successful holding of elections will encourage refugees to exercise their right of return and calls upon the new government to fulfil its obligations under international law regarding returning refugees.

"The Security Council notes that the successful holding of elections represents a critical step towards economic development. The Council urges the international community to continue to provide support and assistance to Liberia through this period of reconstruction.

"The Security Council further notes that the successful conclusion of the electoral process marks the fulfilment of a key element of the UNOMIL mandate.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."